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## EARLY HISTORY OF THE BOSTON TRAINING-SCHOOL

By MRS. CURTIS AND MISS DENNY

Members of the Original Board

OF two out of the three Training-Schools which were the first ones started in America histories have been given in the November number of this JOURNAL, and the present paper will be devoted to the school attached to the Massachusetts General Hospital and known as the Boston Training-School for Nurses.

From the time that Florence Nightingale's name and work were known to the American public, and especially after the publication of her little book, there was a growing feeling in America that in the course of time nursing might come to be recognized as something to be taught, not merely taken up as one way of earning money, without any thought of special fitness for an occupation dealing with life and death. The Boston school began under very different circumstances from its predecessor. The Bellevue school was only made possible by the splendid battle fought by the women of New York against the cruel suffering endured by patients in a great city hospital where much of the nursing was done by pauper women. There was no reason of that kind to stir up a demand for a change in the two large hospitals of Boston. Indeed, the difficulty to be struggled with was the fact that while the nursing was in general as good within the hospital as could be found for money, a hospital staff would very naturally look with surprise and alarm at a proposal to bring within its walls an entirely new régime,—one, too, to be carried on by those who themselves must learn how to teach.

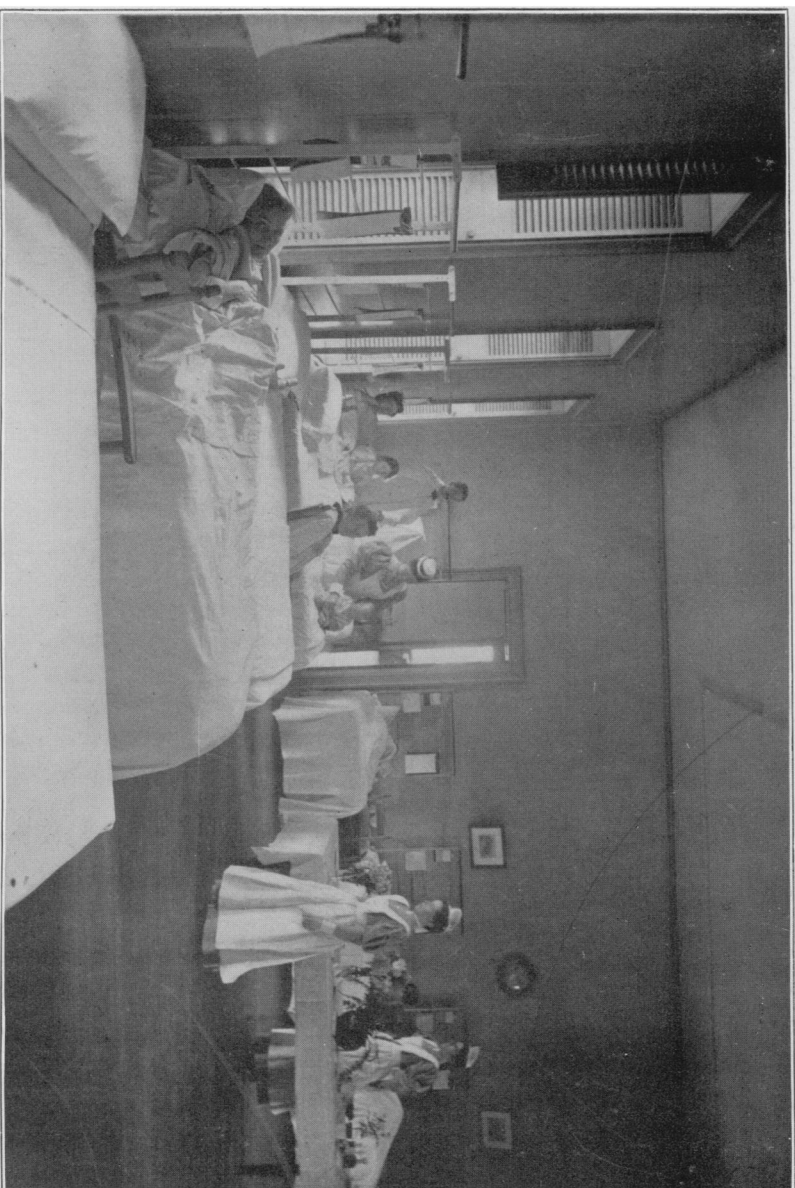
The great need and importance of a training-school for nurses in Boston was one of the first subjects that attracted the attention of the Woman's Education Association, and I copy the following extract from their "Second Annual Report:"

"A meeting was called as early as June, 1872, to consider the subject, and it was made a special object of discussion in two or three meetings during the next autumn? In the winter of 1873 a member of the committee heard of the excellent school for nurses which had been established in New York. She made a visit there, and satisfied herself that the plan was a wise one and would succeed. The report induced the committee to believe that they had really found what they had been so long seeking. They called a parlor-meeting in order to consider the subject more fully and to interest persons outside of this association in the plan. This meeting brought out the expression of so much interest and so much sympathy with the movement that though the difficulties of the undertaking were seen to be great, the committee reported in favor of it at the regular meeting of April 10, and recommended that it should be committed to the charge of twelve ladies and gentlemen, who should organize it and carry it on independently of this association."

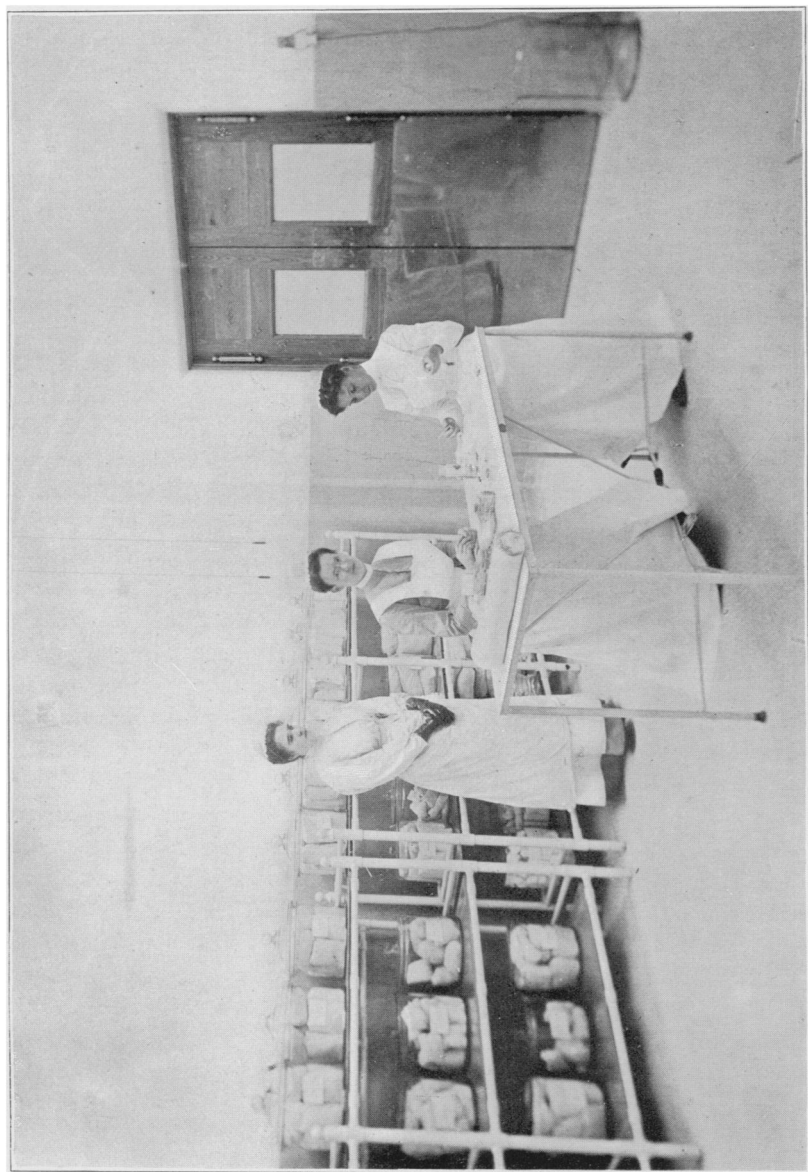
In consequence of this action a circular was sent out summoning a meeting of all those who were interested either for or against the training of nurses. The meeting was held in May, 1873, and was large and representative,—those who, without knowing how such a revolution was to be brought about, were eager for the day when this new order of being, a trained nurse, was to be had for the asking and pay—for it must be remembered that it was not only the quality, but the quantity, that was lacking; and, literally speaking, the whole of a long day had sometimes been spent in searching for a reliable nurse. There were not many physicians present; a few came to watch proceedings; some to speak—not unfriendly words, though rather anxious ones. Dr. Susan Dimock gave encouragement with most delightful voice and manner. The upshot of it all was that a committee was formed, and then the work began,—I mean the work of finding what was possible to be done: first to decide upon a plan, to ask for the coöperation of physicians, and to raise money necessary to carry out the experiment. As the result of this a letter was sent to the trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital asking their permission to establish the Training-School in connection with that hospital. The answer seeming favorable to the plan, a conference was arranged.

In July a definite proposal was received from the trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital that two wards—one of these the Brick Building, as it was then called—should be placed in charge of the Training-School. "The Brick" was selected for three reasons: that it represented the medical and surgical departments and that it offered the work desirable for the training of the nurses.

Here may appropriately be introduced two papers which passed be-



AN OLD WARD UNDER THE NEW RÉGIME  
Massachusetts General Hospital



MODERN OPERATING-ROOM ANNEX  
Massachusetts General Hospital

tween the trustees of the hospital and the directors of the Training-School defining the relations between the two :

"In committing the charge of nursing the patients in the Massachusetts General Hospital to the Training-School for Nurses, the trustees of the hospital propose the following conditions:

"1. This relation between the hospital and the Training-School shall continue during the pleasure of the trustees.

"2. Such of the nurses now employed by the hospital as the trustees wish to retain shall be adopted by the Training-School.

"3. Nurses and pupils of the Training-School shall not attend the patients of the hospital without previous training in moving and caring for persons in bed. Their training within the walls of the hospital shall include such instructions in cooking and in the making of poultices and other appliances for the sick as are essential to good nursing.

"4. Nurses appointed by the Training-School to serve in the wards of the hospital shall agree to continue in service at least two years, but the trustees retain the right to discharge them from service in the wards for sufficient cause.

"5. Superintendent, nurses, pupils, and all persons employed by the Training-School at the hospital shall be subject to such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the trustees. They shall be under the exclusive medical jurisdiction of the physicians and surgeons of the hospital, and no instruction of or interference with said persons within the hospital shall be permitted without consent of said physicians and surgeons.

"6. The number of nurses and pupils boarded, lodged, and paid at the expense of the hospital shall be fixed by the trustees.

"7. Wages shall be paid directly by the hospital, and not through the Training-School.

"8. The duties of the superintendent of the Training-School shall not conflict with those of the matron of the hospital, assigned to her by the trustees."

"*S. Eliot, Esq., Chairman, etc.*

"MY DEAR SIR: I am instructed to say, on behalf of the directors of the Training-School, that the conditions under which the trustees propose that the school shall continue its connection with the hospital seem to them satisfactory—with the following limitations and explanations, which they propose to the trustees:

"As to condition No. 1, that the connection of the school with the hospital may be dissolved at the desire of either the trustees or the directors upon reasonable notice—say not less than two months; as to No. 3, that it is understood that facilities for instruction in cooking shall be given within the hospital; as to No. 4, that the director of the school also retain the right to discharge any nurse or pupil; as to No. 5, that the word 'interference' shall not be held to apply to the rules and discipline which (subject to the regulations of the hospital) the directors may judge necessary for the good government of the school, nor to the visits of the directors made to inform themselves of the condition of the school. As the wages of each pupil have to be fixed in the original agreement with her, we propose that the present rate (ten dollars a month for the first year and sixteen dollars a month for the second year) be accepted by the trustees for the exist-

ing agreements, and that any change in the rate in future agreements be made by the consent of the trustees and the directors. The directors have voted to agree to the conditions if it shall seem proper to the trustees to consider the above explanations to be a part of them.

"I am, etc.,

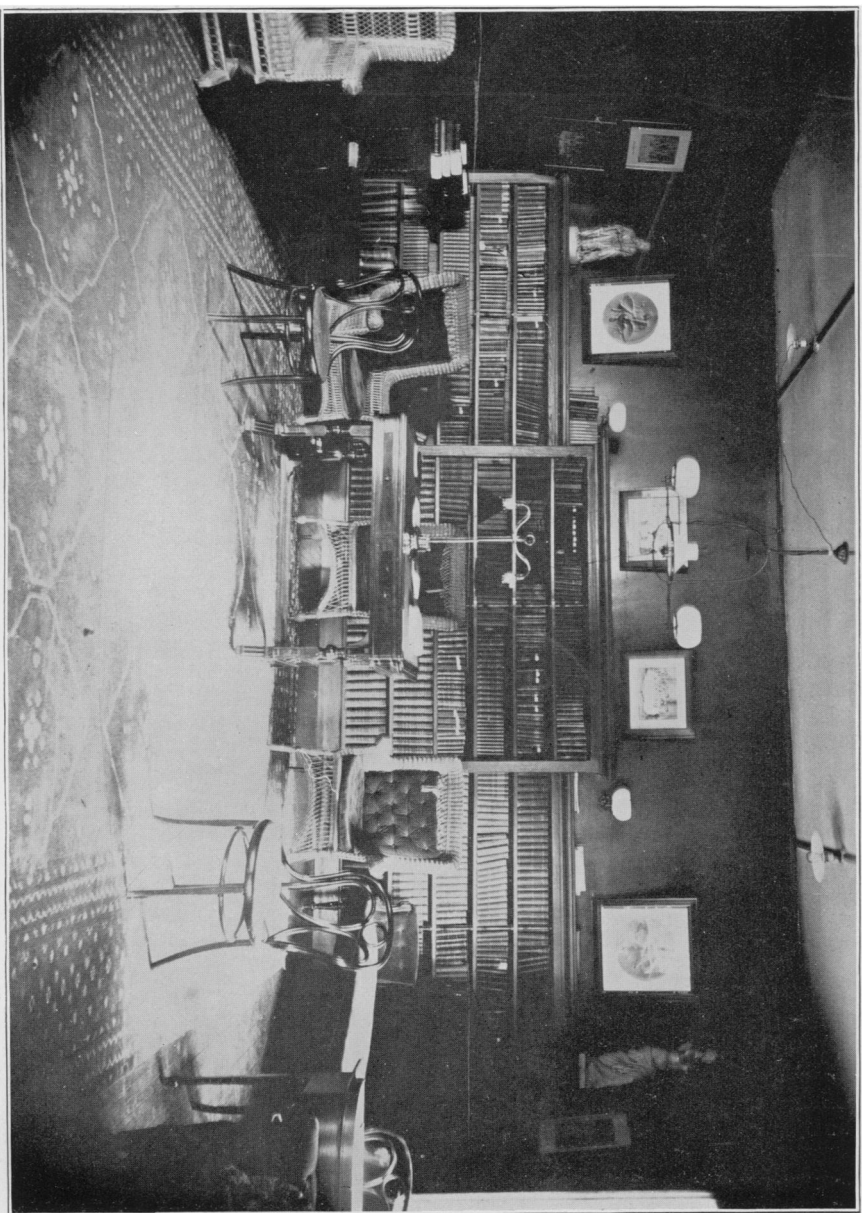
"M. BRIMMER."

These regulations having been adopted, Dr. Folsom would be ready to put more wards under the charge of the school if the experiment proved satisfactory. The circular asking for funds from the public had been made unnecessary, as sufficient money had been received in voluntary contributions to authorize the hiring of a house very near the hospital to receive the nurses. A superintendent had been engaged who was to spend three months at the Bellevue Hospital to study their methods before taking charge of the school. All this had been brought about with constant meetings and much thought, and by October the Board of Managers was able to notify the hospital that it would be ready to undertake the work on November 1. On October 30 the board held its first meeting at the Nurses' Home, where already the superintendent and two nurses were installed, and the rest of the applicants chosen had been notified to present themselves.

The old Monthly Records show how much care and consideration were given to every step taken, and with the result that by January, 1874, Dr. Folsom had promised to put two new wards of the hospital into the hands of the Training-School.

A new era began when Miss Linda Richards agreed to take the position of superintendent in November of 1875, and within the same year the school was incorporated. In November the first graduates, three in number, received their diplomas. One remained in the hospital as head nurse of a ward, one went to the New Haven Hospital, and the third to private nursing. In April, 1877, to the great regret of the directors, Miss Richards resigned her place as superintendent in order to carry out her plan of going to England, but under her management the school had advanced so far that she left it in charge of all the wards in the hospital with the exception of one, the private ward. This ward was, by the wish of the trustees, retained in charge of the hospital for some time longer, but eventually it was given, with the rest, into the hands of the superintendent of the Training-School. The home had been given up some time before, and all the nurses were lodged in the hospital.

And so, in less than ten years, all had been accomplished that was included in the first plan of the Women's Education Association. The hospital authorities had not only given the care of the patients to the nurses of the Training-School, but had done all in their power to aid



CORNER OF LIBRARY IN THE NURSES' HOME  
Massachusetts General Hospital



them by instruction, and the public gave constant employment to the graduates.

The building of the "Thayer," giving a dwelling to the nurses connected with the hospital and yet entirely apart, with every arrangement for rest and comfort, was of incalculable benefit. Year by year added improvements to the instruction in their profession. When in 1895 it was decided that the Training-School should pass entirely into the hands of the hospital authorities and the Board of Directors therefore ceased to exist, the half dozen of nurses who were sufficient for the experimental beginning had increased to seventy-two, with superintendent and assistant superintendent. Three hundred and ninety-eight nurses had been graduated, of whom fifty-eight became superintendents or assistant superintendents in other hospitals, one hundred and eighty-six took up private nursing, and the remainder either died or returned to other occupations.

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## REVERENT CARE OF THE DEAD

By CHARLOTTE M. PERRY

Graduate Massachusetts General Hospital Training-School

How truly our beliefs, our sense of the infinite and of the "permanence of man's individuality and being" in the life to come, influence us towards a reverent care of the dead is perhaps not perceptible to us during the busy hospital career. That centre of activity was often the scene of sorrow to bereaved relatives of patients, but under the pressure of many duties there was not time to realize more than the bald fact of death. We went down to the river's edge with our patient and closed his eyes to all earthly sights, were touched by the sad spectacle, and then hurried back into the whirl of work. According to the frequency of this experience, we may have felt less its significance, and even have become perfunctory in the discharge of those duties allotted to us in this connection.

Sooner or later, however, we must form some definite conceptions regarding the mystery of life and death; and it will be from those who entertain high ideals of the sanctity of the human body in its present and future relations, those who take into account the element of responsibility for all deeds done in the body with which every moral and reasonable being is endowed, that we shall expect a reverent care of the shrine of the soul at the time of death. There will be some sense of the intimate relations which have existed between the body and that immaterial part of us which lives on, quickened, in the disembodied state, with a keener